

# LIBERTY SAND SCRIPT



17TH SIGNAL BATTALION

ISSUE 4

15 MARCH 2005



## COMMANDERS CORNER

AO LIBERTY, IRAQ - Greetings again from central Iraq. Operationally speaking, another two very good weeks have quickly sailed by us. Just when I think our soldiers are performing at their best and that things can't get any better, they prove me wrong and continue to make it better in every way. Their efforts have been tremendous. To give you an idea of the scope of the task, this battalion supplies

the majority of the communications for AO Liberty. Roughly the size of West Virginia, AO Liberty stretches from Baghdad to Kirkuk in the north and from the Iranian border to the western limits of Salah Ad Din province. A major task, but one our soldiers have performed magnificently.

CSM Grigsby and I continue to move around the battlefield. Yesterday we convoyed to Kirkuk and visited with one of our teams from the 578<sup>th</sup>. SGT Fraser's team, G19, was looking sharp and doing a great job. We plan on spending a few days with B Company within the next week or two and we are looking forward to spending some time with the Warriors.

As always, the soldiers of this battalion continue to excel. C Company was officially awarded the USAREUR Army Award for Maintenance Excellence in Heidelberg. Over the past weekend, the 17<sup>th</sup> Signal Battalion won the softball tournament held on FOB Speicher. Great Job!

I would like to take a moment to say thank you to all of the individuals and groups that have been and are starting to send care packages to the troops. We are beginning to receive boxes full of useful and sundry items. As packages come into the S1 shop we will distribute those items among the sites and make it a point to get packages out to the sites that have no or very little AAFES facilities. We greatly appreciate the generosity and support of the American people. It means a great deal to us. Every letter, care package and prayer makes a big difference to our Soldiers. On behalf of all of them, I would like to say thank you.

We Lead The Way! - LEADER 6



LTC Kennedy and CSM Grigsby enjoying Breakfast with Charlie Company on their visit to FOB-Caldwell

"THE SOLDIERS  
OF THIS  
BATTALION  
CONTINUE TO  
EXCEL!"

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## HHC HEROS



Greetings  
Family and Friends,  
Here at FOB Speicher things continue to go well. HHC soldiers are staying busy as always, but are slowly finding time for relaxation and recreation. The Leader Lounge MWR facility hosted volleyball games on FEB 27 to the enjoyment of all. Jim McCue and Joey Carroll, two very funny comedians, entertained soldiers on the FOB on March 10.

On March 12, there was a FOB wide softball tournament. HHC had a team made up of soldiers from not only HHC but also

Delta, and 578<sup>th</sup>. Playing a total of three games, the Heroes easily

won the first two games with scores of 26-10 and 22-0. The final championship game against 557th Maintenance proved to be more difficult. Down 4 runs at the start of the last inning, the Heroes proved they had a lot of heart scoring an amazing 10 runs to win the game and the tournament 22-19.



In other news, R&R has begun this month. Approximately 10 percent of HHC soldiers will go each month on R&R from now until sometime in the fall. Also some soldiers will be afforded four day passes to either recreation facilities in Northern Iraq or Qatar where they can wear civilian clothes, participate in various recreation activities, and not have to worry about anything army related.

Thank you for all the mail, thoughts, prayers, and well wishes. We all appreciate it. Until next time, take care.

## ALPHA EAGLES

Greetings Family and Friends of Alpha Desert Eagles

All is well here in Saddam Hussein's former home town. The company has made tremendous strides in improving our work and living areas. Those of us on FOB Speicher will have the opportunity to see some comedians perform for us in the near future. We are also beginning to conduct training that we usually perform in garrison. We will be conducting ranges, PT tests, and hot

us. We are all grateful to them for their support.

1st Platoon has had an outstanding first

subscribers on FOB Danger to include the Commanding General. Headquarters Platoon

has also done an outstanding job under the helm of SSG Charles Harris, who arrived shortly before our deployment. The mechanics have kept our vehicles and generators working expertly.

Congratulations to some of our recently promoted soldiers: SPC James Lawrence, SPC William Hancock, and PFC Wesley Howard.

Big congratulations go to Alpha Companies newest parents SPC Jeremiah and Nadine Mintener, born to them Raquel Mintener on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March.



SGT Delos Santos at NC 11



The Ranch Houses

month in system; Providing communications for 13 separate subscribers, the Node Center and Small

Extension Nodes process in excess of 17,000 calls per day. B13, led by SPC Sean Amick has been especially commended for his out-

standing service provided to the FOB Speicher Fire Department. Letters of appreciation were given from the Fire Department to the team for their outstanding performance.

2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon has also been giving outstanding support to the

**"ALPHA  
COMPANY  
HAS BEEN  
ADOPTED BY  
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VETERANS  
OF FOREIGN  
WARS POST  
3968!"**



weather training in anticipation of the approaching high temperatures.

Alpha Company has been adopted by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3968; they are rounding up supplies and care packages to send to



Patch of Grass

### BRAVO WARRIORS



SGT Thomas

As the 17<sup>th</sup> Signal Battalion NCO of the Quarter I would like to thank my fellow soldiers and my command for the support shown to me. As a soldier I accepted the challenge to compete against other leaders to continue to hold up the bar to which every soldier is held. Most people assume that standards need to relax during a deployment, that other tasks take precedence over training or maintenance. As a professional soldier I realize that

these tasks are redundant, they are designed that way; how else do you expect to do what you must should the time arise. I must admit when first asked to compete I did not feel pride or even duty, I felt fear and surprise. I feared the risk of travel and I was surprised that what I then considered a garrison frivolity was to continue in the desert.

As family members of soldiers deployed with the 17<sup>th</sup> know that your loved ones are safer than you may think; thanks in no small part to the enforcement of standards I spoke of before. The soldiers on our convoy teams know that is their main mission. Those teams train and plan for every possibility. They have been outfitted and supplied well. In closing I would just like to thank those men and women who routinely leave the relative safety of the FOB for supplies, personnel movement, and mail.



As the NCO of the quarter I would like to thank those who helped me the most. I would like to thank the soldiers of the B company convoy team who drove me all the way to Speicher and then brought me "home" again, so that I may see my wife and my unborn son when our job here is done. Thank you for maintaining the standards of the 17<sup>th</sup>.



Battalion Commander giving SGT Thomas a BN coin



SGT Thomas and SSG Ehrenberg

### CHARLIE COMPANY

Headquarters platoon of the mighty Charlie Company has been working hard on maintaining the excellent level of support that we are best known for. SSG Sanchez and his motor pool soldiers have continued to keep our vehicles ready for any mission, anywhere. SGT Peeler from the motor pool was our

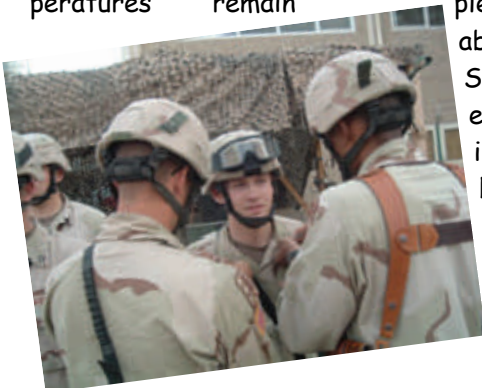


first one to go on R&R leave at the beginning of March. He was able to meet his new born son for the first time as well as being able to receive the AAME award which will be presented by USAREUR on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March.

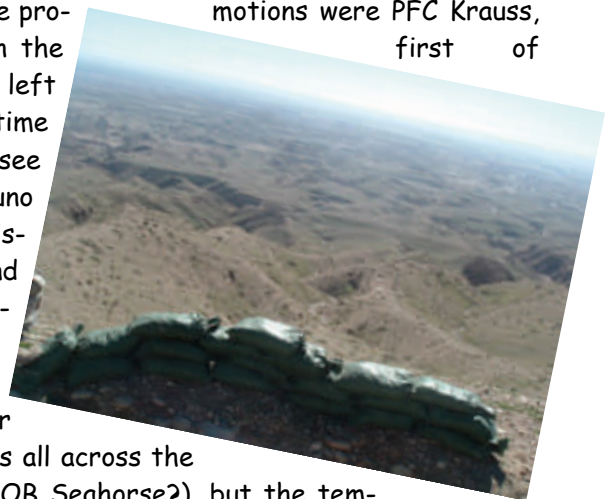
We think we have made it through the rainy season, but just when you thought it was over, it rains again. We probably shouldn't complain. We'll be begging for rain around July. The first of March also saw a visit by CSM Grigsby and LTC Kennedy to Gladiator land. They came to promote one of our Gladiator family members, SSG Roberts from Staff Sergeant to Sergeant First Class. It is a well deserved and hard earned promotion and a great honor to have such fine guests present for the promotion. Congratulations SFC Roberts!!

The soldiers of 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon continued with business as usual for the first half of the month of March. The Battalion Command team visited Camp Caldwell and was able to stay a few days and observe the work setting and living situations of the soldiers. There were also a lot of promotions during this time. SPC Hays was the latest soldier to be welcomed to the Corps of Noncommissioned officers by being pinned to the rank of Sergeant. Other soldiers to receive promotions were PFC Smith R., and PV2 Steenge. The soldiers have also seen the effect some time home can have on a soldier as PFC Orduno returned from his R&R refreshed and ready to continue his mission here. Soldiers will be going on passes to Lake Dokan and Qatar for a small but well deserved break to these nice relaxation areas

Over at FOB Warhorse the most exciting news to report is that as of 13 March 2005, we no longer have to wear our body armor to the dining facility! It has been raining for days all across the country which has turned the FOB into a giant sticky lake (FOB Seahorse?), but the temperatures remain



pleasant. The network has stabilized considerably, and we have been able to work on site improvement, maintenance, and even some training. Some teams will be moving in the coming weeks to support our subscribers' needs; this will require flexibility and positive outlooks from all involved. Please keep the mail coming! As we prepare for the summer heat, things like drink mixes, insect repellent, and always, clean socks and underwear will be appreciated. Thank you again for keeping our spirits high and our homes strong.



# ISSUE 4

## DELTA COMPANY

PFC Phillipe working on an exhaust system



I'm sure you all enjoy hearing about how great chow was yesterday and what amenities the soldiers are privy too. But let's take a look at what each breed in the Dawg Pound has to offer to the mission.

Switch Dawg (canis smartious pants): Often referred to as running the show, this breed of dawg runs the network and en-

bring the orders to the Warfighter. Trans Dawg (canis sending the signalous): This breed of dawg is responsible for getting the call from point A to point B. Often found passing the hours sleeping in the van due to how well they keep the shots in.

Cable Dawg (canis



SPC Schweigl & PFC Hager working on the network

humpenous the cable): Commonly referred to as the backbone of the team. Often seen carrying a reel of wire and butt set, these dawgs are the one on one interface to the customer ensuring that everyone remains happy with their services. Ops Dawg (canis humanoid resourceous): A hard dawg to find due to the massive amounts of pa-



SPC(P) Pierce Processing the day away

perwork and reports due daily. These guys keep the morale up as long as the mail is flowing and the pay inquiries are fulfilled.

SEN Dawg (canis distant endous): A close relative of the Switch Dawg these guys are courteously and professionally ensuring that the DIVARTY HQ and 313 Field Artillery are receiving the best subscriber services on FOB Summerall. Away from all the hoopla these guys keep the phones ringing virtually unsupervised. PFC Phillipe working on an exhaust system

Maintenance Dawg (canis turnous the wrenchous): Often the unsung hero of the pound. These characters turn the wrenches on the trucks that keep us moving. Without this crew we would surly be in sorry shape (a.k.a. walking every where)

Hopefully this little dissertation about what everyone's function is has enlightened you as to what comprises a family as tight as the Dawg pound.



SPC(P) Fegan cranking up the antenna

Special Congratulations to people who passed the promotion board:

SGT(P) Dumas, Lee ; B90  
SPC(P) Bishop, Holly; B91  
SPC(P) Hjelm, Drew; LEN 16  
SPC(P) Pierce, Elizabeth; Operations

SPC Kariotis operating the SEN B90



PFC McCall returning from running phone line

sures the subscribers of the DREAR and the DISCOM are happy campers. They

### 578th KNIGHTS



PFC Fulk poses for a "I'm working hard on a truck" shot in the 578<sup>th</sup> Motorpool.

Two down and ten to go... months that is. I remember thinking during the last deployment to OIF I, "wow, it's already been two months and now there's only ten to go...pretty soon we'll be in the single digits". Seven or eight months into the deployment I also remember thinking how crazy it was to be excited about only having ten months left, but here I sit again feeling optimistic for the very same reason, ten months. I guess the point is that everyone deals with a deployment in their own way and if you choose not to be as positive minded about it as you possibly can, then you're only making it harder on yourself. I'm happy to report that the Soldiers of the 578<sup>th</sup> Signal Company all seem to be on the right track.

Right when you think that things are starting to calm down, they pick back up again and that I suppose is just the nature of the military. The teams are all settled and doing their thing in providing long-haul communications to the

Coalition Forces here in Iraq, but there are changes on the horizon. One of the main focuses as of late has been the establishment and training of the 578<sup>th</sup> convoy team. They are led by SGT Daniel Stout, a light-wheel vehicle mechanic, and their mission in life aside from their everyday jobs will be to provide a means for the 578<sup>th</sup> Commander and First Sergeant to support the 21 teams that are spread over 600 kilometers of Iraq from Mosul all the way down south to Diwaniyah. Some of the goals for the convoy team are one, for all of them to be Combat Lifesaver qualified, and two, for them to know not only their jobs on the team but also each others jobs inside and out. Another important topic as of late is the kick off of the R&R program. We have acquired a total of 16 slots for the month of March for Soldiers to go home for two weeks so they can relax and take a well deserved break. We also have another five slots for a four day trip to Qatar which was very popular during the last deployment, so it's looking like the 578<sup>th</sup> Soldiers will have ample opportunity to take some time off and unwind. Finally, 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon TROPO has received the word to pack up and come on up here in the north to join us here in HQ's along with 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon. We can't wait to have them here and I know they're excited about it as well. I'm sure they've been very lonely



SPC Guglielmo swings mightily at the pitch... he almost hit it too.

the last month and a half.

Well, that's about it for this time. Bottom line is that we're all here doing what we all signed a contract to do, and getting paid pretty well to do it. I know that everyone here misses their loved ones back home and vice versa, so lets just continue to make the best of things. Before we know it we'll be in some bar in Germany laughing

about the time SPC Mrykalo beat SPC Barrigar in an arm wrestling match.



From left to right: SGT Stout, 1SG Williams, SPC Cockrum, SPC Gilbert, and 1LT Acosta enjoy some Green Beans Coffee at Camp Danger.



## CHAPLAINS COMMENTS

### WRESTLING WITH GOD

We wrestle with many things in this life. We wrestle with people. We wrestle with finances. We wrestle with good and we wrestle with bad. We wrestle with these things because the intent is to obtain something from them that we do not presently have. I ask the question, since we wrestle with pretty much everything conceivable to the human mind, why is it that we are so reluctant to initiate a Wrestling with God? Do we believe that God has nothing for us that we need? Do we simply believe that we are self-sufficient without any need for God?

Or have you ever found yourself in the wee hours of the night wrestling with God? Have you ever noticed that it tends to be in our darkest hour when we begin to strive with the Lord for a blessing of which we know we are not deserving? And when we wrestle with God, is it not a way of exacting vindication for ourselves through the exorcism of our own demons within? A wrestle with God is not for the faint of heart. It requires faith, humility, perseverance and endurance. It requires a boldness and fervor knowing where you stand in God. It requires knowing God's promises that

are stated in His word. But let's be honest, it's too difficult to wrestle with God. It's much easier to wrestle with other people in order to obtain what we want. *Money, clothes, shelter, food, education, promotions, productive and healthy children, etc. - all come from God.* But most of us don't get that. That's why we look to government, organizations, etc. We look to psychologists and self-help gurus to give us piece of mind. That's why some folk go to drugs and alcohol to drown their sorrows. We wrestle with finances, with spouses, with siblings, co-workers and friends. We wrestle with these people or these things with the sole intent of obtaining something from them that we do not presently have. We think that in wrestling with them we'll obtain what we need the easy way and so we consequently factor God completely out of the equation. This we do, not realizing that the consequences of our sin we'll eventually catch up with us.

Often times we think we can beat God. And of course we say "no never me, I would never say that." And you're right the vast majority of us would never ascend to such arrogant heights as to claim that we can beat God or perhaps do something better than He. Instead, our actions speak to the contrary. We

sometimes try to manipulate our future or our destiny to serve our own agenda without considering the agenda of God.

Wrestle with God for the many blessings that He has for us such as strength to endure the separation from our loved ones, wrestle with Him for character, integrity and the ability to show compassion, mercy and forgiveness towards all those with whom we come in contact.

Amazingly enough, God in His infinite and redeeming love and grace continues pleading with us to forsake the exclusion of Him and embrace Him as the permanent substitution for receiving all the blessings He has for us. And when this plea is presented to us, if we accept, we are plunged into the ultimate wrestling match of our lives - a wrestle with God.

